

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A treatment for patients afflicted with concomitant dysphagia and another disease or injury different from dysphagia comprising a soluble food fiber thickener in a liquid food to allow the patient to successfully swallow liquid foods.
2. A treatment in accordance with Claim 1 where the other disease is at least one of blunt throat injury, surgery caused impairment, stroke, multiple sclerosis, Asperger syndrome, esophageal cancer, laryngeal cancer, Chagas disease, celiac, cystic fibrosis, Huntington's disease, Niemann-Pick disease, neurological conditions such as amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, obesity, Riley-Day syndrome, high cholesterol, corn allergies and corn sensitivities, scleroderma, and diabetes.
3. A treatment in accordance with Claim 1 wherein the soluble food fiber thickener is one or more of alginates (sodium, potassium, or ammonium salts), carrageenan, cellulose such as sodium carboxymethylcellulose sodium, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hydroxypropyl methyl cellulose, galactomannans such as locust bean gum, guar gum and xanthan gum.
4. A treatment in accordance with Claim 3 where the soluble food fiber thickener is added on site prior to consumption by a patient and optionally is added using a beverage dispenser with a thickener concentrate.
5. A treatment in accordance with Claim 3 where the soluble food fiber thickener is added at a point of preparation of a pre-thickened ready-to-consume thickened liquid food.
6. A treatment in accordance with Claim 3 where the thickener is xanthan gum.
7. A treatment in accordance with Claim 6 where the xanthan gum ranges from about 0.01% to about 7% of the final ready-to-consume liquid food.

8. A treatment in accordance with Claim 6 where the xanthan gum is between 0.1% and 3% of the final ready-to-consume liquid food.
9. An effective treatment for dysphagia which comprises feeding pre-thickened ready-to-consume liquid food compositions with aesthetic or composition or digestive properties or combinations thereof improved to provide for greater consumption by dysphagic patients.
10. A treatment in accordance with Claim 9 wherein the thickener used in the thickened liquid food compositions is one or more of alginates (sodium, potassium, or ammonium salts), carrageenan, cellulose such as sodium carboxymethylcellulose sodium, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hydroxypropyl methyl cellulose, galactomannans such as locust bean gum, guar gum and the like and xanthan gum.
11. A treatment in accordance with Claim 10 where the thickener is xanthan gum.
12. A treatment in accordance with Claim 10 where the xanthan gum is between 0.01% and 7% of a pre-thickened ready-to-consume liquid food composition.
13. A treatment in accordance with Claim 10 where the xanthan gum is between 0.1% and 3% of a pre-thickened ready-to-consume liquid food composition.
14. A method for increasing the liquid consumption of a patient with dysphagia by providing liquid foods to the patient thickened with a thickener having an improved taste and appearance.
15. A treatment in accordance with Claim 14 wherein the thickener used in the thickened liquid food compositions is one or more of alginates (sodium, potassium, or ammonium salts), carrageenan, cellulose such as sodium carboxymethylcellulose sodium, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hydroxypropyl methyl cellulose, galactomannans such as locust bean gum, guar gum and the like and xanthan gum.
16. A treatment in accordance with Claim 14 where the thickener is xanthan gum.

17. A treatment in accordance with Claim 16 where the xanthan gum is between 0.01% and 7% of a final ready to drink liquid food composition.

18. A treatment in accordance with Claim 16 where the xanthan gum is between 0.1% and 3% of the final ready to drink liquid food composition.

19. A method for caring for a dysphagia patient at home or in an institution which comprises feeding pre-thickened liquid food compositions with aesthetic or composition or digestive properties or combinations thereof improved to provide for greater consumption by dysphagic patients.

20. A method in accordance with Claim 19 wherein the thickener used in the thickened liquid food compositions is one or more of alginates (sodium, potassium, or ammonium salts), carrageenan, cellulose such as sodium carboxymethylcellulose sodium, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hydroxypropyl methyl cellulose, galactomannans such as locust bean gum, guar gum and the like and xanthan gum.

21. A method in accordance with Claim 19 where the thickener is xanthan gum.

22. A method in accordance with Claim 21 where the xanthan gum is between 0.01% and 7% of the pre-thickened liquid food composition.

23. A method in accordance with Claim 21 where the xanthan gum is between 0.1% and 3% of the pre-thickened liquid food composition.

24. A process for diagnosing and managing dysphagia which comprises utilization of a consistent thickening system in radiological compounds used for radiological diagnosis and the thickened liquid foods ordered as a result of the radiological procedure.

25. A process in accordance with Claim 24 wherein the thickener used in the radiological compounds and the thickened liquid food compositions comprises at least one or more of alginates (sodium, potassium, or ammonium salts), carrageenan, cellulose such as sodium carboxymethylcellulose sodium, hydroxypropyl cellulose,

hydroxypropyl methyl cellulose, galactomannans such as locust bean gum, guar gum and the like and xanthan gum

26. A process in accordance with Claim 25 where the thickener is xanthan gum.

27. A process in accordance with Claim 25 where the xanthan gum is between 0.005% and 7% of the radiological compounds or the thickened liquid food composition.

28. A process in accordance with Claim 25 where the xanthan gum is between 0.05% and 3% of the radiological compounds or the thickened liquid food composition.

29. A process for diagnosing and managing dysphagia which comprises utilization of a consistent rheology system, while allowing variation in the specific thickeners employed, in both the radiological compounds and the thickened liquid foods ordered as a result of the radiological procedure.

30. A process in accordance with Claim 29 wherein the thickener used in the radiological compounds and the thickened liquid food compositions is one or more of alginates (sodium, potassium, or ammonium salts), carrageenan, cellulose such as sodium carboxymethylcellulose sodium, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hydroxypropyl methyl cellulose, galactomannans such as locust bean gum, guar gum and the like and xanthan gum wherein each compound may use one or more of the same or different thickener to achieve the consistent rheology.

31. A process in accordance with Claim 29 where the thickener is xanthan gum.

32. A process in accordance with Claim 31 where the xanthan gum is between 0.005% and 7% of the radiological compounds or the thickened liquid food composition.

33. A process in accordance with Claim 31 where the xanthan gum is between 0.05% and 3% of the radiological compounds or the thickened liquid food composition.

34. A medical facility having an x-ray facility operated using radiological compounds and thickened liquid foods prepared in a manner such that their objective fluid characteristics are the same and the thickening system is generally the same.

35. A facility in accordance with Claim 34 wherein the thickener used in the radiological compounds and the thickened liquid food compositions is one or more of alginates (sodium, potassium, or ammonium salts), carrageenan, cellulose such as sodium carboxymethylcellulose sodium, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hydroxypropyl methyl cellulose, galactomannans such as locust bean gum, guar gum and the like and xanthan gum

36. A process in accordance with Claim 34 where the thickener is xanthan gum.

37. A process in accordance with Claim 36 where the xanthan gum is between 0.005% and 7% of the radiological compounds or the thickened liquid food composition.

38. A process in accordance with Claim 36 where the xanthan gum is between 0.05% and 3% of the radiological compounds or the thickened liquid food composition.

39. A process for the production of homogenous single phase thickened beverages by a dispensing machine that is capable of dispensing non-thickened beverages.

40. A process in accordance with Claim 39 wherein the dispensing machine includes a container of thickener concentrate, a metering pump and an in-line static mixer designed such that beverages exit the dispenser at the correct thickness, with a homogenous appearance and are ready to drink, whether the beverage thickness is increased by inclusion of the thickener concentrate or not.

41. A process in accordance with Claim 39 wherein the dispensing machine includes a container of thickener concentrate, a metering pump and an exit nozzle with a narrow gap or pressure drop or and liquid foods exit the dispenser at the correct thickness, with a homogenous appearance and are ready to drink, whether the beverage thickness is increased by inclusion of the thickener concentrate or not.
42. A process in accordance with Claim 39 wherein the thickener used in the thickener concentrate is one or more of alginates (sodium, potassium, or ammonium salts), carrageenan, cellulose such as sodium carboxymethylcellulose sodium, hydroxypropyl cellulose, hydroxypropyl methyl cellulose, galactomannans such as locust bean gum, guar gum and the like and xanthan gum
43. A process in accordance with Claim 42 where the thickener is xanthan gum.
44. A process in accordance with Claim 42 where the xanthan gum is between 0.005% and 10% of the thickener concentrate.
45. A process in accordance with Claim 42 where the xanthan gum is between 0.05% and 5% of the thickener concentrate.
46. A medical care facility comprising at least one of a personal home, assisted living care and a nursing home having a health care system comprising treating patients by a method in accordance with Claim 1.
47. A medical care facility comprising at least one of a personal home, assisted living care and a nursing home having a health care system comprising treating patients by a method in accordance with Claim 2.
48. A medical care facility comprising at least one of a personal home, assisted living care and a nursing home having a health care system comprising treating patients by a method in accordance with Claim 3.
49. A health care management system comprising a method of treating patients to provide a suitable daily living sustenance by a method in accordance with Claim 1.

50. A health care management system comprising a method of treating patients to provide a suitable daily living sustenance by a method in accordance with Claim 2.

51. A health care management system comprising a method of treating patients to provide a suitable daily living sustenance by a method in accordance with Claim 3.